

Remarks

Claims 1 and 16 have been cancelled. Claims 2-15 and 17-27 remain pending. Claims 2-9, 15, 17-20, 23, 24, and 27 have been amended. We thank the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter for claims 7-15, 18-23 and 27. Claims 7 and 18 have been rewritten in independent form. We have not rewritten claim 27 in independent form as we believe the following comments traverse the rejection to the intervening claims. Amendments to other claims are discussed below with respect to the detailed action dated February 7, 2008.

Amendments to Specification

We have noted minor typographical errors in page 2 of the specification and have taken this opportunity to correct them. The errors are clearly identified on page 2 of this submission. We respectfully request entry of these amendments.

Claim Objections

The Examiner objected to claim 5 for using an acronym without its proper definition. Amended claim 5 is dependent on amended claim 7, which provides a proper definition for the acronym AU, as an administrative unit. We respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to claim 5.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 112

The Examiner rejected claim 1 as being indefinite. We have cancelled claim 1 thereby rendering the objections thereto moot. However, we have addressed the Examiner's objections in rewriting claim 7 in independent form. In particular, we have amended the preamble of claim 7 to recite "A method of processing an output signal", thereby providing suitable antecedent basis for the term "output signal" appearing in previously presented claim 1. Due to this amendment, we have amended the term "an output signal" in line 2 to recite "the output signal." We have made similar amendments to claims 18 and 24 submitted herewith.

Furthermore, we have amended the phrase "a state of the control signal" to recite "the state of the control signal" in amended claim 7.

We have also taken this opportunity to correct an inadvertent omission in the previously presented claim 1. The term “administrative unit (AU)” from the original claim 1 was omitted in the amendment dated November 9, 2007. We submit that this omission was not an intended amendment to previously presented claim 1 as evidenced by no corresponding “strike-through” text in the marked up version. We have included the term “administrative unit (AU)” in amended independent claim 7.

The Examiner rejected claim 15 as being indefinite. We have deleted the word “first” in amended claim 15. A suitable antecedent basis exists for the term “the control bit” in amended claim 7. We have made similar amendments to claim 23 submitted herewith.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 16, 17 and 24 as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,498,794 to Tsukamoto et al. We have cancelled claims 1 and 16 thereby rendering moot the objections thereto.

We have amended claims 2 and 17 to depend from allowable claims 7 and 18, respectively. We submit that claims 2 and 17 are also allowable for at least the reasons that claims 7 and 18 are allowable.

We submit that amended apparatus claim 24 corresponds to allowable method claim 7. In particular, we have amended claim 24 to recite that “a first memory storing a control bit”, which is similar to the method step “storing the control bit in a connection memory” as recited in amended claim 7. Thus, we submit that amended claim 24 is allowable for at least the reasons that claim 7 is allowable.

We respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw his objections under 35 USC § 102.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102

The Examiner rejected claims 3-6, 25, and 26 as being obvious in view of Tsukamoto et al.

We have amended claims 3-6 to depend from allowable claim 7. We submit that claims 3-6 are also allowable for at least the reasons that claim 7 is allowable.

In addition, we submit that claims 25 and 26 are allowable for at least the reasons that amended apparatus claim 24 is allowable.

We respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw his objections under 35 USC § 103(a).

We believe that this application is in condition for allowance and respectfully request an early action in this regard.

No fee is believed due for this submission. However, Applicant authorizes the Commissioner to debit any required fee from Deposit Account No. 501593, in the name of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP. The Commissioner is further authorized to debit any additional amount required, and to credit any overpayment to the above-noted deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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